

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2004**

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	2005 Budget Briefing
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Work Session – Permit Review Process
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Skagit Conservation District Field Tour

The Skagit County Commissioners met in regular session on Wednesday, July 14, 2003, with Commissioners Ted W. Anderson, Don Munks and Kenneth A. Dahlstedt present.

2005 PRELIMINARY BUDGET BRIEFING:

Budget/Finance Administrator, Trisha Logue, gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the budget for 2005. She touched on several points including supplemental budgets, reclassifications, new positions, and unemployment claims. Ms. Logue also spoke about the new Central Services Department, which was created January 1, 2004 and is made up of Geographic Information Systems, Information Services and Records Management. A budget worksheet overview was provided and Ms. Logue said the budgets are due to the Skagit County Auditor by 4:30 p.m. on August 9, 2004. Budgets are due to the Commissioner's Office by September 10, 2004, with a Public Hearing to be held on December 6, 2004 to adopt the 2005 budget.

Skagit County Administrator, Gary Rowe, stated that Skagit County will need to continue to evaluate and prioritize County services as we plan for the 2005 budget and beyond. Our highest priority continues to be to protect and plan for the health, safety and welfare of current and future citizens. The County needs to explore ways to work with cities, towns and other taxing districts to find ways to keep costs down.

Mr. Rowe said the following goals and policies are intended to guide the preparation of department budget requests for 2005. As departments prepare budget requests, they need to keep these goals and policies in mind as they will be the basis for evaluating budget requests and for setting spending limits.

Fiscal Objectives:

1. The budget, when adopted, will need to be balanced within available resources. A five-year forecast of revenues should include a draw down of reserves to help balance the budget while maintaining minimum reserves.
2. A minimum reserve of 10% should be maintained for all operating budgets. Spending of General Fund reserves should be prioritized for one-time or short duration expenses that support budget goals and objectives.
3. The preliminary budget should be prepared with a zero percent cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for employees. Adjustments to salaries as a result of the salary market and classification study need to be added to the budget. If funds are available, consideration will be given for a COLA by the Board when they adopt the budget in December.
4. The Board should continue to look at cost recovery for services that are primarily funded through service fees. Alternative funding sources for programs should be considered. In particular, efforts to look at an alternative funding source for the Salmon Recovery Fund need to be made to reduce the dependence on General Fund transfers.

Budget Priorities:

5. Programs that maintain and enhance public safety and public health should be given the highest priority for the allocation of discretionary resources, such as property tax and sales tax. With

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2004
PAGE NO. 2**

uncertainty for future tax revenue collections, programs will need to be maintained at the current level where possible.

6. The capital facilities needs of the County need to be identified and adequately funded for the next six years. Planning for expansion of the County jail and/or a work release facility needs to continue. Plans for a new Health Department facility also need to be prioritized.
7. Prioritize continued funding for resource protection programs, including water resource planning, water quality monitoring, surface water management and flood management.
8. Continue funding for the development of community plans together with the five-year update of the County Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Efficiency Objectives:

9. Consolidate programs where missions are similar and funding streams can be leveraged. Efforts need to be made to find ways to share personnel, equipment and facilities where feasible.
10. Funding for technology enhancements and process improvements that improve the overall productivity of the County should be prioritized.
11. At the same time, priority should be given to provide training for County employees to fully utilize the technology and equipment available to them. Along with training, certification requirements should be established for County employees in order to advance in the pay-step system.
12. The Board should continue to look for opportunities to partner with cities, towns and other local governments to work together in delivering services. Partnering agreements need to ensure that costs are equitably apportioned.
13. The Board should look at privatization of services where long-term service goals can be met with competitive pricing for those services.

The Commissioners thanked those present for attending.

ADJOURNMENT.

Commissioner Munks made a motion to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Ted W. Anderson, Chairman

Don Munks, Commissioner

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2004
PAGE NO. 3**

ATTEST:

JoAnne Giesbrecht, Clerk of the Board
Skagit County Board of Commissioners